

MAYOR'S COMMITTEE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

February 8, 2010

MINUTES – Meeting in Newton City Hall – Cafeteria

PRESENT: Rob Caruso (Co-Chair), Girard Plante (Co-Chair), Jane Brown, Lucie Chansky, Jini Fairley, and Barbara Lischinsky

REGRETS: Jeff Hutter, Rosemary Larking, Heather Platt, and Jason Rosenberg

STAFF: Beverly Droz (Human & Vol. Services), Kathleen Cahill (Planning & Dev.)

GUESTS: None

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The meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm and chaired by both Girard and Rob.

Tonight we are reviewing the CDBG Access Projects for Fiscal Year 2014 and 2015 and determining which projects will be funded, given the small amount of access funds available. It was noted that MCPD can recommend approximately \$123,000 worth of access funding per year. We had heard the project presentations at the two January meetings and prioritized the projects for funding for FY 2011, 2012, and 2013 at the January 25 meeting.

Kathleen distributed copies of the document entitled “project ranking considerations” sheet and reminded members to keep in mind these 4 major Consolidated Plan Access priorities during ranking process

1. Public Thoroughfare Improvements
2. Public Buildings Improvements
3. Parks & Recreational Facilities Improvements
4. Non-Profit Agency Improvements

We then reviewed the 13 projects for FY2014:

Project Name	Project Description	Amount
Newton Centre Playground Pathway, Phase VI	Construction of a pathway from Homer street to the Little League field.	\$50,000
Richard J. McGrath Park (aka Warren Playground) Master Access Plan	Details unknown until Master plan is completed	\$40,000
ADA Compliant Ramps City-Wide	Funds to hire a professional licensed surveyor to survey the park topography and funds to hire a landscape architect to master planning services.	\$42,000
Accessible Building Directory Sign for Education Center	Three accessible building directory signs to be located in the front entrance lobby, a landing going to the second floor, and at the rear parking lot entrance lobby.	\$5,000
Farlow Tot Lot	Rubberized safety surfacing to create an accessible route in the playground.	\$4,500
River Street Park Accessible Route	Rubberized safety surfacing to create an accessible route to the swings.	\$5,000
Burr Park Stair(s) Handrails	Replacement of non-compliant handrails at Arlington St & Park St stairwells.	\$12,500
Cold Spring Park Pathway Phase II	Construction of an accessible pathway from the parking lot to the bleachers.	\$5,000

Cabot Park Master Access Plan	Funds to hire a professional; licensed surveyor to survey the park topographically and funds to hire a landscape architect for master planning services.	\$25,000
Newton Centre Playground Pathway , Phase V	Construction of an accessible pathway form Centre Street to meet Phase IV pathway at the accessible bubbler.	\$50,000
Burr Park Accessibility	Construction of an accessible walkway designing and installing the accessible walkway to connect Waverly Avenue accessible entrance to accessible walkway from Park street to the P&R building.	\$50,000
Cabot Park Access, Phase I	Details unknown until master plan is completed	\$40,000

Each member was given time to individually rank the FY14 proposed projects.

The three highest ranked FY14 projects were:

1. ADA Compliant Ramps Citywide, \$68,000
2. Newton Center Playground Pathway, Phase V, \$50,000
3. Accessible Building Directory sign for Educational Center, \$5,000

For a total of \$123,000

There was discussion to see if there would be enough remaining funds to address the need for additional Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS) city-wide. Barbara noted the value APS because they serve pedestrians year-round. Members noted that the installation of these signals remain important in terms of access priorities. Unfortunately CDBG access funding is limited.

Lucie was concerned about waiting to install the Education Center accessible signage until FY2014, when it is needed today. It was noted that we already voted for FY11-13 priorities, and again we are in a hard place since the access funding available is only enough to cover a percentage of the projects proposed by applicants. .

There was discussion of allocating 10% (or \$12,300) of the funds for a “To Be Determined” (TBD) account. Since intersection signals cost about \$5,000 per intersection, this TBD money could potentially fund two signals. If the TBD account is created, then each project would lose some funding:

1. ADA Complainant Ramps Citywide, \$68,000→\$61,200
2. Newton center Playground Pathway, Phase V, \$50,000→\$45,000
3. Accessible Building Directory Sign for Educational Center, \$5,000 →\$4,500

Thus, there were two options: 1) Let each project receive their intended allocated amounts or 2) Reduce their funds by 10% in order to establish a TBD fund to be used at the MCPD’s discretion.

A motion was 1st made by Lucie, 2nd by Jini for Option 2 and it passed unanimously.

FY15 projects

Projects that didn’t get funded were added to the FY15 list and members individually ranked their priorities.

Project Name	Project Description	Amount
Newton Centre Playground Pathway, Phase VII	Construction of a pathway from Little League Field to Universal play area.	\$40,000
Cabot Park Access, Phase III	Details unknown until master plan completed.	\$40,000

ADA Compliant Ramps City-Wide	Self-explanatory.	\$100,000
Newton Centre Playground Pathway, Phase VI	Construction of a pathway from Homer Street to the Little League Field.	\$50,000
Cabot Park Access, Phase II	Details unknown until master plan is completed	\$40,000
Richard J. McGrath Park (aka Warren Playground) Master Access Plan	Funds to hire a professional licensed surveyor to survey the park topographically and funds to hire a landscape architect for master planning services.	\$42,000
Farlow Tot Lot	Rubberized safety surfacing to create an accessible route in the playground.	\$5,000
River Street Park Accessible Route	Rubberized safety surfacing to create an accessible route to the swings.	\$12,500
Burr Park Stair(s) Handrails	Replacement of non-compliant handrails at Arlington St & Park St stairwells.	\$5,000
Cold Spring Park Pathway, Phase II	Construction of an accessible pathway from the parking lot to the bleachers.	\$12,500
Cabot Park Master Access Plan	Funds to hire a professional licensed surveyor to survey the park topographically and funds to hire an architect for master planning services.	\$42,000
Burr Park Accessibility	Construction of an accessible walkway designing and installing the accessible walkway to connect Waverly Ave. accessible entrance to accessible walkway from Park Street to P&R building.	\$50,000
Cabot Park Access, Phase I	Details unknown until master plan is completed	\$40,000

Discussion followed.

The three highest ranked FY15 projects were:

1. ADA Compliant Ramps Citywide or \$48,00
2. Newton Centre Playground Path, Phase VI, \$50,00
3. Cold Spring Park Path, Phase II, \$25,000

For a total of \$123,000

Kathleen explained that the cost of each curb cut varies depending on whether it is an existing curb cut that requires retrofitting or the creation of a new curb cut where none existed. Curb cuts cost about \$5,000, so an intersection with 8 cuts could cost \$40,000.

Lucie suggested an Option 2

1. ADA Compliant Ramps \$73,000
2. Newton Center Playground Path, Phase VI, \$50,00

For a total of \$123,000

Then members discussed a 3rd Option with the 10% set aside for the “To Be Determined” Fund:

1. 1.ADA Ramps, \$73,000→ \$66,700
2. 2.Newton Center Playground Path, Phase VI, \$50,000→ \$45,000
3. 3.TBD Project now has 10% of the funds, or \$12,300

For a total of \$123,000

Rob called for a vote. **A motion was made by Jane and 2nd by Barbara to accept Option 3 and the motion passed unanimously.**

CDBG REPORT - Kathleen Cahill

This report was submitted to MCPD by email before this meeting for their review. Per usual it is copied here within the minutes. Kathleen Cahill presented the report. Comments are noted after a project.

Accessible Pedestrian Signals (Project CD10-03D. Expended, \$7,818; Budget balance: \$17,995; CD10-03D). Centre St. and Centre Ave. is a priority intersection; however that is on-hold pending a final decision by the Newton Corner Advisory Committee on VHB conceptual plans. Washington St. and Commonwealth Ave. is another priority intersection. The scope of changes at Washington & Commonwealth includes an upgrade to the existing traffic signal equipment; there is approximately \$65,000 in funds available for this work. If leftover funds are available after the above equipment is installed accessible pedestrian signals will be considered and the Mayor's Committee will be able to weigh in on options (a letter from the MCPD to C. Schuckel was sent and the co-chairs will meet with C. Schuckel). Other priority locations submitted to traffic engineering include: Washington and Beacon as well as Washington Street by Newton-Wellesley Hospital. Based on a recent presentation to City employees and MCPD members by the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind Polara (push button mounted) APS will be installed at these locations. C. Schuckel is obtaining a quote.

There was a discussion about the plans for accessible improvements, including the installation of APS, at Washington and Commonwealth. Rob and Girard remembered past discussions concerning the mitigation funds from National Development (Arborpoint) and Newton Wellesley Hospital originally for traffic improvements at Washington St. and Commonwealth Ave. Rob noted that we have no authority over the funds or know which department is overseeing the expenditure of the funds. Barbara agreed to contact Clint Schuckel to find out status of the Washington and Commonwealth Avenue project.

Charlesbank Playground (Project CD0903C. Budget balance, \$30,000). Project includes the installation of a ramped concrete walkway with metal handrails, designed to complement new play equipment, benches, and picnic tables and allow access through the park. Ray Dunetz, the landscape architect retained for the project, has completed 95% of the work on the construction documents and a phasing plan for the park. The project is expected to be bid in March.

Curb Cuts (Project CD1003C, Expended \$2,465 Budget balance, \$145,000). Design work has been requested for a total of 11 curb cuts in the Newtonville area, including Lowell and Washington. Planning and DPW will be working to have these locations ready for construction in summer 2010.

-- Kathleen said she will bring photos of Gibbs and Sumner before and after the work.

Kathleen is working with the Department of Public Works to leverage Chapter 90 funds in order to complete access improvements at Lowell and Washington.

Retrofitting Curb Cuts (Project CD0903E, Budget balance, \$6,000). A list of 7 locations (Homer Street, Beacon St. @ Dalton, Centre Green @ Langley, 1188 Centre Green, 82 Lincoln Street, 100 Walnut Street, 28 Commonwealth St) (19 curb cuts) have been identified by committee members and staff. Project 10% complete; although tactile surfaces have been added to these intersections most locations require additional corrective action to be ADA compliant.

-- Kathleen is not satisfied with the corrective work completed by DPW and will be looking for an

additional work to be done prior to releasing project funds..

Cold Spring Accessible Route (CD10-03A, Budget balance: \$36,000) Project includes accessible “L shaped” pathway from parking area to circle where the farmer’s market is held. Project will be bid with other CDBG-R (stimulus) projects in March and begun summer 2010.

Nahanton Accessible Pathway and Handicap Parking Space (CDR09-03, Budget balance: \$30,000) Project includes retrofitting park for handicap accessibility through the construction of an accessible pathway and the addition of a van accessible parking space. Project will be bid in March and constructed summer 2010.

Newton Centre Accessible Pathway and Handicap Parking Spaces (CDR09-04, Budget balance: \$23,500) Project includes construction of an accessible pathway and the addition of two handicap accessible parking spaces. Project will be bid in March and constructed spring 2010.

Angino Farm Accessible Route and Cedar Beds (CD10-03E, Budget balance: \$1,152.14). Project includes purchase of accessible cedar planting beds for the Farm’s Learning Garden and the construction of an accessible route from the handicapped parking to the Learning Garden. Project complete; awaiting final labor bill from DPW.

--Kathleen noted that CPC recently approved some funding for the farm barn building. There will be a later opportunity to revisit this project.

MINUTES

A motion to accept the January 25, 2010 minutes was made by Jane, 2nd by Jini and the minutes were approved.

NEW / OLD BUSINESS

Bev reported that Nancy Jodoin is inquiring with the MBTA Commuter Rail to make more frequent stops in Newton when they are going west in the AM and going east in the PM in order to alleviate the intense strain on disabled individuals who cannot drive when there is no MBTS bus available. When Nancy has more information, she will let the MCPD know and perhaps together we can seek Mayoral support for this endeavor.

Bev reported that she heard from a resident who experienced difficulties with listening devices at both the West Newton Cinema and the Chestnut Hill Cinema when she was there recently to view movies. Bev was asked to notify Dave Norton in Inspectional Services.

Bev reported that she heard from a resident who is frustrated with the location of the HP space behind the Newton Centre Post Office and the Staples outlet. Rob noted it has been like that for years when a video store moved in. The HP space is the building owner’s responsibility.

Bev gave an update on the Safe Sidewalks coalition for snow removal. Ald. Vicki Danberg has been appointed the chair of the Aldermanic sub-committee and she is meeting on a regular basis with coalition members. They are working on a public relations campaign with letters and PR.

Barbara reported that the CVS on Route 9 is out of compliance with a HP space at Elliot Street. It requires signage and striping. Barbara has brought the matter to the manager three times.

Lucie reported that at the Atrium mall’s escalator from Valet to the first floor is constantly broken.

A motion passed to adjourn at 8:45 pm.

Note: The next regularly scheduled meeting is March 8, 2010.

Respectfully submitted, Beverly Droz